

Dear Senators:

I am writing to ask you to support S.B. No. 437 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE FOR GENETIC COUNSELORS. This act is necessary in Connecticut to ensure the provision of quality genetic counseling services by qualified health professionals with specialized training in the field of genetic counselor or medical genetics. Many other states now license genetic counselors or are working towards this effort in order to maintain a high quality of care for the public. Over one third of genetic counselors in the U.S. are licensed.

I am a board certified genetic counselor with over thirteen years of experience working for university and private genetics departments in Connecticut, California, and Canada. I earned a Master's Degree in Genetic Counseling from the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University. Throughout my career, I have witnessed individuals and families make life-changing decisions using information provided during genetic counseling, and I have seen them benefit from the supportive care that genetic counselors are uniquely trained to provide.

Genetic counselors provide an important and needed service. They have expertise in genetics and genetic counseling and function as an essential member of the health care team. Genetic counselors have the ability to explain, accurately and in easy-to-understand terms, difficult and constantly evolving genetic information to patients; evaluate a complex family history; and, evaluate the need for genetic testing. They provide genetic information in a context of supportive care and sensitivity that is tailored to each patient's/family's particular needs.

Genetic counselors keep up-to-date, through their training and continuing education, with advances in genetic technology, refinements in genetic testing and the implications of testing for the individual and their family members.

With the rapid advances in genetic technology, genetic counseling licensure is needed to ensure that the public is receiving this complex medical service by trained, qualified professionals who are committed to the field's professional standards and continuing education. Genetic counseling licensure will ensure that the public is afforded the best level of care when utilizing genetic counseling services.

Thank you for your consideration of the licensing of genetic counselors in the state of Connecticut.

Sincerely,

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